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Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 3 November 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

As you know, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was always a keen participant, in its capacity as an observer, in the meetings of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country in the light of the Committee's importance as a body for the adoption, in a fair and non-discriminatory manner, of measures aimed at maintaining appropriate conditions for the conduct of the work of missions and delegations to the United Nations.

Given our interest in the Committee's meetings, we proposed our candidacy for membership when the General Assembly decided to expand the Committee by adding four new members. It was agreed that we should occupy the seat in the Committee designated for the African Group with effect from 1999. This has encouraged us to take an even greater interest in the Committee's meetings, being one of those delegations that are the object of discriminatory practices on the part of the Government of the host country that have impeded their work and prevented them from performing their duties in a normal manner. We should like to receive formal notification from the United Nations Secretariat of any meeting of the Committee, whether regular or special, in ample time for us to prepare for it and be able to participate in a systematic and effective manner, rather than be informed only by way of the *Journal* of the United Nations like all other delegations. We were thus surprised to learn from the *Journal* that there had been a formal meeting of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country on Wednesday, 27 October 1999. We only became aware of it when it was too late, so that we were forced to miss it. We therefore hope that the Committee secretariat will in future inform the members of the Committee in ample time of its meetings.

On another matter, I have the honour to inform you that despite the many resolutions adopted by the General Assembly calling for the lifting of the travel restrictions imposed by the host country on officials of certain missions and on officials of the United Nations Secretariat who are of certain nationalities, the host country continues to accord discriminatory treatment to some diplomatic missions to the United Nations in New York, including the Libyan Mission. Such treatment is exemplified in the imposition of travel restrictions on Mission personnel, in confining their movement to the City of New York itself and in obstructionism in the granting of entry visas to Mission personnel and the members of Libyan delegations to United Nations meetings. Visas are given only after a delay of more than three weeks and are valid for only one journey. When the Permanent

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Representative and members of the Mission are obliged to leave their assigned duty station to attend special meetings outside the United States, they are thus required to wait for long periods of time for approval of the host country in order to attend such meetings or to obtain the necessary entry visas. We have on many occasions suddenly been confronted with the refusal of the host country authorities to approve our attendance at such meetings, and this impedes the work of the Libyan Mission in New York and has prevented it from carrying out its tasks in a normal manner. This is to be regarded as a violation of the Headquarters Agreement and as disregard for the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions. By way of example, the Libyan Mission in New York was unable to take part in the meeting held on 28 December 1998 by the Organization of African Unity at the residence of the Permanent Representative of Nigeria, which is outside New York City. It was also unable to participate in a one-day seminar at American University in Washington, D.C., on 6 April 1999, where the Permanent Representative had been invited to give a lecture on the problem of landmines. The United States authorities refused to allow the invitation to be accepted.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

(*Signed*) Abuzed Omar **Dorda**
Permanent Representative